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WineMichigan names Sen. McManus Legislator of the Year

LANSING – WineMichigan on Tuesday honored state Sen. Michelle McManus with their 2005 Legislator of the Year award. McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, received the award for her work to preserve direct wine shipping rights for Michigan wineries and consumers.

Also receiving Legislator of the Year honors were Reps. John Proos, R-St. Joseph; Kevin Elsenheimer, R-Bellaire; and Howard Walker, R-Traverse City. Angel Sorrells, former legislative aide for McManus, was named Legislative Staffer of the Year.

“These outstanding lawmakers came to the rescue of our 42 wineries across the state and understood how important it was to preserve shipping rights for Michigan wineries,” said Mike Beck, president of WineMichigan and owner of Uncle John’s Cider Mill in St. Johns.

“The leadership and assistance of these fine individuals helped us to reach a compromise agreeable to both our wineries, as well as the wholesalers,” said Don Coe, 2005 president of WineMichigan, and partner in Black Star Farms winery. “This legislation provides acceptable direct shipping limits that allow even the smallest winery to keep its doors open.”

Last December, lawmakers unanimously approved legislation allowing Michigan wineries to continue to ship wine directly to customers, while opening the doors to out-of-state wineries to do the same.

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Photos of Sen. McManus receiving her award are available for download at
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/McManus/McManus.htm